



Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Original) A method for treating hepatic disease or improving liver function comprising administering to a subject in need thereof, who has not been hepatectomized, an effective amount of valine in the form of a composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an effective ingredient, and wherein said valine has a therapeutic effect on hepatic disease *per se*.

2. (Original) A method for improving liver function comprising administering to a subject in need thereof who has not been hepatectomized an effective amount of valine in the form of a food composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an active ingredient, and wherein said valine *per se* has an effect of improving, and does improve, the function of said liver.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 2 wherein the food composition is a functional food.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the hepatic disease is hepatitis.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 1  
wherein the hepatic disease is hepatic insufficiency.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1  
wherein the hepatic disease is cirrhosis.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 1  
wherein valine is L-valine.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 2  
wherein valine is L-valine.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 1  
wherein the administration is by injection.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 1  
wherein the administration is by infusion.

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to  
claim 1 wherein the administration is by the oral route.

12. (Original) A kit for treating hepatic disease  
or improving liver function comprising an effective amount of  
valine in the form of a composition which contains valine as  
an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino  
acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an active  
ingredient, and instructions for treating hepatic disease or  
improving the liver functions for a patient who has not been  
hepatectomized.

13. (Original) A kit for improving liver function  
comprising an effective amount of valine in the form of a food

composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids, and in which said valine has an effect of *per se* improving the function of the liver, and instructions for improving the liver function for a patient who has not been hepatectomized.

14. (Original) The kit according to claim 13 wherein the food composition is a functional food.

15. (Original) The kit according to claim 12, wherein the instructions are for hepatitis, hepatic insufficiency, or cirrhosis.

16. (Original) The kit according to claim 13 wherein the instructions are for hepatitis, hepatic insufficiency or cirrhosis.

17. (Original) The kit according to claim 14 wherein valine is L-valine.

18. (Original) The kit according to claim 15 wherein valine is L-valine.

19. (Original) The kit according to claim 12 wherein the composition is in a form for injection.

20. (Original) The kit according to claim 12 wherein the composition is an infusion preparation.

21. (Original) The kit according to claim 12 wherein the composition is an oral preparation.

22. (Original) A method for treating hepatic disease selected from the group consisting of acute hepatitis, chronic hepatitis, hepatic insufficiency, and cirrhosis comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an effective amount of valine.

23. (Original) The method according to claim 22 wherein the acute hepatitis and chronic hepatitis are caused by a hepatitis virus.

24. (Previously Presented) A method for treating chronic hepatopathy or improving liver function comprising administering to a subject in need thereof, who has not been hepatectomized, an effective amount of valine in the form of a composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an active ingredient, and wherein said valine has a therapeutic effect on chronic hepatopathy *per se*.

25. (Previously Presented) A kit for treating chronic hepatopathy or improving liver function comprising an effective amount of valine in the form of a composition which contains valine as an active ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an active ingredient, and instructions for treating

chronic hepatopathy or improving the liver functions for a patient who has not been hepatectomized.

26. (New) A method for treating or improving a low albumin level comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an effective amount of valine in the form of a composition which contains valine as an effective ingredient and which is entirely free of other amino acids or substantially free of other amino acids as an effective ingredient.

27. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the low albumin level accompanies a lowering of the hepatic function.

28. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the composition is a food composition.

29. (New) The method according to claim 28, wherein the composition is a functional food.

30. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the low albumin level is a low albumin level in blood.

31. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the low albumin level is a low serum albumin level.

32. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the low albumin level is hypoalbuminemia

33. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the valine is L-valine.

34. (New) The method according to claim 26,  
wherein the composition is an injection or an infusion  
preparation.

35. (New) The method according to claim 26,  
wherein the composition is an oral preparation.